



Heart of Florida United Way



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Heart of Florida United Way Invests \$1 Million to Create New, Permanent Home for New Image Youth Center in Parramore

Community Leaders Gather to Mark the Milestone at the New Building Site in Parramore

ORLANDO, Fla. (August 4, 2023) – Today, Heart of Florida United Way (HFUW) announced a \$1,000,000 investment in the New Image Youth Center (NIYC), an organization that provides after-school and summer programs for Parramore’s children and teens. The funds were specifically invested for the purchase of a new building, located at 446 S. Parramore Ave. in downtown Orlando.

NIYC, celebrating its 19th anniversary this year, provides academic support, social development, health and wellness support, crisis intervention, and social justice programming for K-12 students residing in the Parramore community. HFUW has partnered with NIYC previously, making smaller investments to support programming. However, when the future of NIYC was threatened by increasing rent prices and crumbling infrastructure, HFUW decided to invest in the long-term success of this organization – a new home.

“From the moment I saw the stream of smiling children entering the Center, so excited to see Miss Shanta, each of them hugging her before they grabbed a snack and sat down to do their homework, I knew this place was special,” said Jeff Hayward, President & CEO, Heart of Florida United Way. “After seeing the wall of graduates – dozens of pictures of students in their caps and gowns who had celebrated high school graduation over the years – I was convinced of the impact New Image Youth Center and Miss Shanta was having on each of these children and the neighborhood. Without a doubt, they needed a new and permanent home. United Way is proud to be a part of their journey.”

Although extensive renovations are needed, this is exactly where the future of the New Image Youth Center is meant to be according to Dr. Shanta Barton-Stubbs, NIYC’s Executive Director.

“The New Image Youth Center has been able to bring almost 20 years of transformative youth programming to the Parramore community,” said Barton-Stubbs. “Now with the stability of having a forever home with the help of Heart of Florida United Way, we are looking forward to providing more services to more youth for the next 20 plus years to come. What a way to show our current generation of children, and our alumni how much the community supports their future.”

In 2004, 21-year-old Barton-Stubbs saw a need to support youth in a neighborhood where violent crime, drug abuse, and homelessness were commonplace. That first summer, she started with eight youth, \$1,500 of savings, and a handful of used board games. Today, New Image Youth Center is a consistent presence in the lives of youth who often lack stability.

“The New Image Youth Center has provided a safe and supportive environment with invaluable resources which has allowed this young, black Haitian woman to fearlessly pursue and unlock her greatest potential in spaces that lack representation such as, medicine and real estate while supporting her family along the way,” said Chanika Charles, NIYC alumna.

Funding for this initiative is from a historic \$20 million gift from philanthropist and author MacKenzie Scott. This was the largest single gift HFUW has ever received in the organization’s 83-year history.

“MacKenzie Scott is the new standard for philanthropists to follow,” continued Hayward. “We are grateful she selected us and now we want to make sure the dollars are put to use in a way that will transform lives by providing opportunities that will yield dividends for generations to come. It is also our hope that other corporations and philanthropists step forward to generously invest with us. In order to live better, we must all Live United.”

Visit www.HFUW.org for more information about Heart of Florida United Way and to learn more about how to get involved. To learn more about NIYC, including how to get involved in the newly launched capital campaign, visit www.NewImageYouth.org.

About Heart of Florida United Way:

Heart of Florida United Way (HFUW) is Central Florida’s most comprehensive health and human services charity and the largest provider of funds to the region’s most critical health and human service programs. In 2019-20, it raised and managed more than \$34.7 million in total resources, including \$29.5 million raised for the Community Fund that invests in dozens of vitally important programs in the community throughout Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties. HFUW fights for the health, education and financial stability of every person in Central Florida. It operates United Way 211, Central Florida’s information and assistance, crisis, suicide and referral helpline; Volunteer Resource Center and the Ryan White program, which administers nearly \$3.2 million to provide HIV/AIDS services and referrals. HFUW impacts more than 400,000 individuals annually through its direct service and funded programs. United Way partners with local businesses, government, other charities to increase awareness of local health and human service issues and to inspire hope, provide options and create possibilities for people in need. Visit www.HFUW.org for more information, or call (407) 835-0900. Follow us on Facebook at Heart of Florida United Way and on Twitter and Instagram @hfuw